

THE QUIVER

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"You must be my wife."—p. 4.

IN DUTY BOUND.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "MARK WARREN," "DEEPDALE VICARAGE," "A BRAVE LIFE," ETC. ETC.

CHAPTER I.—WHAT HAS BECOME OF HER?

IF he took a house, he must marry." He thought he was beginning the world with no very great resources at his command. If you cross the market-place, you will come to a modest-looking door, which stands open all day to

admit clients. Here you can read his name and profession, engraven in brass letters—"Mr. Vincent, solicitor.

A young lawyer, with good introductions, and with plenty of address, was sure to be welcome in the small and rather dull town of East Bramley. Horace Vincent had no reason to complain of his reception; but he looked forward to happier times than these—times when he should be able to quit Mrs. Perkins's lodgings, and have a house of his own.

There was a house to let a few doors off. It was just the place for him, if he could only afford the rent; but the utmost stretch his resources would allow—nay, his whole income—was £150 a year. Besides, if he took a house, he must marry.

As if by an involuntary movement, he raised his eyes to the window. No; there was nothing to be seen. The inhabitants of the market-place were taking their tea. Early hours were observed in East Bramley. Besides, of all the unsuitable persons in the world—

No—no; he could not begin life by making a mistake like that. He must have a connection, position, money, and so forth.

And yet his eye fell again on the window.

Suppose he made a bold stroke, and asked Miss Easton to marry him. She was as rich as could be, and had the best position in the town and county; and she was a great beauty. There was no one considered worthy to be compared to her.

But—his eye fell again on the window—no; he did not think—desirable as the match might be—that he should ever make an attempt in the direction of the Eastons. There was a rich widow who had been very kind to him; indeed, no one could be kinder. She had told him her house was to be his home. He might go and drink tea with her this very night.

But that was not the subject-matter just now. A sweet, gentle girl, who would sit sewing opposite to him, and be the very embodiment of domestic felicity; who would keep his buttons stitched on, and regulate his grocery, and not let him be pillaged; who would be kind and affectionate, and a companion. He hesitated, in a curious way, about the last clause of the sentence. And did he know any such person? He had seen one twice every day since he had lived in Mrs. Perkins's apartment. A little figure had gone tripping by morning and evening, and a sweet face, with a pair of dovelike eyes, had been shyly turned to give him a glance. He wondered often what he was thinking about to dwell so much upon the fact, and what there was, when he came seriously to discuss the point, that was so interesting about her.

And how could he, who was on his preferment, and with the world's tardy favour to be wrung from her—how could he suppose for a moment—that he could marry Ruth Smith? Nonsense! A girl with-

out a sixpence in the world—without even connections!—daily governess to the children of the ironmonger just opposite.

He had seen Ruth Smith in her own house, divested of the well-worn straw hat, and the shawl that had done service many a season. He knew the soft dovelike eyes had a touch of innocent wonder in them that was irresistible; that her complexion was fair as a lily; that her hair was a rich auburn, and had a wave in it that was singularly beautiful; that she wore it coiled round her head in a way that was, to say the least of it, classical. Not that she knew, poor child, what the word classics meant. She had ground over the sentence often enough in the schoolroom, where she was daily governess to the ironmonger's children—"Homer, the prince of poets," &c. &c.; but this was all.

He knew the style of her home. He had done a little business for the grim aunt with whom she lived. He knew that Ruth was dependent on her, and had neither parent nor friend. The loneliness and precarious nature of her position had interested him from the first; for the grim aunt had sunk her money in an annuity. Horace had tried to shake this resolve of hers. He represented to her the needs of her orphan niece.

"When it should please Providence to remove the only protector she had, what will become of her?" he had said.

"She may do as she does now—earn her bread," was the reply, spoken without much feeling.

Since then, Horace had more tenderness for Ruth Smith than ever. He had been from home a week on business—he had only returned the day before—and he had missed Ruth Smith for the first time. Tired as he was, and perplexed with other cares, he did not forget to look out for her. But there was no Ruth. He could not think what was the reason. It was neither Easter, nor Christmas, nor any other holiday. Could she be ill?

All his thoughts and speculations began to drift in that direction. Like a rapid current, they bore him farther from Miss Easton and the rich widow than ever; and farther, the East Bramley people would say, from his own interests. Be that as it may, he changed his tactics. He would take his tea at home, and he rang for Mrs. Perkins. When he had finished tea, he would go out—where, he had not quite decided.

As the landlady set down his solitary cup and saucer, he began to ask her a few questions.

"Anything stirring in the town, Mrs. Perkins, since I went away?"

"Not much, sir. There's been a wedding, and a funeral, close by here, sir."

"Whose wedding?" asked Horace, briskly.

"No one, sir, as you know. It was at the confectioner's shop at the corner; the young lady that waited behind the counter—"

"Oh," said Horace, in a very indifferent tone; "and what about the funeral?"

"I don't know as you'd mind much about that, either. It was the old lady as lived in High Street——"

"High Street?" asked Horace, quickly.

"Yes, sir. It is not likely you should know her. A Miss Smith lived with her; the girl that goes by here to her teaching."

Horace turned very pale indeed. "Has anything happened to Miss Smith?" he asked, hastily.

"No, sir; oh no. It's the old lady that is dead."

"When?" asked Horace, in a tone of awe.

"The very day you went, sir. She died quite sudden in her chair."

"And Ruth—Miss Smith, I mean?" exclaimed Horace, aghast at the intelligence.

"Well, poor thing, I don't know much about her. She was at the funeral, I suppose. There wasn't any other mourners followed except herself and the doctor."

"How very distressing!" exclaimed Horace, almost in tears.

"You see, sir, she wasn't much liked in the place."

"Who wasn't?" interposed the lodger, sharply, and almost angrily.

"The old lady, sir. She was a very odd sort of person, and no one ever saw much of her. When folks don't make friends, of course they aint to be had just for the asking," added Mrs. Perkins, logically.

"And where is the poor girl now?" asked Horace, feelingly, and with anxiety.

"At her own home, sir, for the present. She will have to leave, of course; but the funeral only took place yesterday."

"Dear me! that all this should have happened in one week!"

He did not say it before Mrs. Perkins. She had left the room, for the first-floor lodger was back, and wanted his dinner.

Horace was alone. "Poor Ruth!—poor girl! What a terrible position! What will become of her?"

It did not all at once come into his mind that he should go and comfort her, or that there was any absolute necessity for it.

An old servant was in the house, and the wife of the ironmonger had been there. So Mrs. Perkins told him, as she went.

His acquaintance with Ruth was very slight indeed. She had seldom spoken before him, except to say yes or no. Perhaps his visit might alarm her. It was sure to be talked of in the gossiping town of East Bramley. Sure and certain to be misrepresented. Why should he care for that? He was deeply sorry for the girl. How young, and innocent, and friendless she was! What a sad life was before her! He knew she would not have a farthing in the world!

It would never do for *him*, of course. Just the most disastrous step he could take. He wished he were rich, and could afford it; then he would transplant the poor little flower from where the rough winds would buffet it almost to death. But, nonsense! How could he marry, in his sober senses?

He was not thinking of marrying—he said it to himself, peevishly—but he might behave like a Christian man and a gentleman. He might step in, and see the poor thing in her affliction. Half an hour would not be ill spent in so doing. And he would set East Bramley at defiance.

CHAPTER II.

HE PASSES THE RUBICON.

OFFICE work had ended for the day. His time was his own, and he walked briskly along, rather in a state of excitement, if the truth were to be told. He wanted to see Ruth very much indeed.

His look of condolence was thrown away on the hard-featured woman who opened the door, and who was in mourning for her mistress.

"Oh, she is very well, thank you, sir," replied this individual, answering his question about Ruth, to which question the look of condolence belonged.

"Miss Smith must have suffered greatly," said Horace, in the same feeling tone, as he stepped into the passage.

The woman made no reply, only she looked a trifle harder than before. Unfortunately, the heart of the young lawyer grew softer every moment. He went into the little room where Ruth was sitting in her desolation. It looked rather forlorn and neglected, but he did not dwell on this fact in the least. His whole attention was fixed on Ruth. She was seated at the table, the newspaper spread open before her. Her black dress made her look fairer than ever. Her hair had its usual lovely wave; her eyes were filled with tears.

The tears were what upset Horace's philosophy in the very beginning. He had never bargained with himself to be half so tender as he was when he took her hand and said—"Dear Miss Smith, I only knew last night. I should have come long before this, if I had."

He never forgot the look of joy that came into her face. "Oh, I knew you would! I felt sure you would!" exclaimed she, weeping and smiling together. "I wanted so to see you before I went."

"Went! Where are you going?" asked Horace, quickly.

"I am going to answer an advertisement for a governess. I have no home now my aunt is dead."

There was something very touching in the girl's utter friendlessness, and yet the patient submission with which she said the words.

"Why can't you stay in East Bramley?" asked Horace, hastily.

"Because I am only daily governess, and I must have a place to live in."

"Won't Mrs. Mudford—" He stopped; he hardly knew what he meant or wished to say.

"No," said Ruth, sorrowfully; "she says she would take me if she could, but the house is small, and she has been wanting to make a change."

"Make a change?" repeated Horace.

"Yes, I am not quite sufficient governess now the children are getting older. She wants them to learn more than I can teach them."

"What a pity!" exclaimed Horace, abruptly.

"Yes, because I am so sorry to leave the town and go among strangers. I love this place—I was born in it." And a tear trembled in her eye again.

"Where do you think of going to?" asked Horace, after a moment's pause.

"I hardly know. That is the advertisement I have just answered. It is a long way off."

"And only a very small salary and a great deal to do," rejoined Horace, reading it. "I can never think of letting you go."

She smiled and blushed. How pretty, how helpless, how forlorn she was! Could he let her go tossing and drifting away to a place where she would be lost to him for ever? What a wretched thing for her to be the drudge of the household for a sum of fifteen pounds a year! And perhaps be unkindly treated—who knows?

"I must go somewhere," continued Ruth. "I can't stay here more than a fortnight longer. And I have no money, except what Martha gives me. My aunt has left Martha the furniture."

"What a shame!" exclaimed Horace, indignantly.

"My aunt was very fond of Martha, and she never liked me," was the meek reply.

"And if you don't get the situation, what shall you do then?" asked Horace.

Ruth's eyes were turned upon him with that look of innocent wonder which was so charming. "I don't know—I can't imagine," she replied.

"Ruth," said Horace, calmly, though his heart had never beat so fast in his life—"Ruth I cannot let you go anywhere. You must stay *here—here, with me.*"

She trembled from head to foot. He saw she did. And she turned pale and red. He could see that she knew what he meant. And it was impossible to stop on that border-land, where to hesitate or to retract would be dishonourable.

He took her hand; his feelings were excited. It was love, he thought, and pity, and a desire to rescue the weak, all combined. His judgment, calmer and cooler, stood aloof while the deed was done. "You must stay, Ruth. Your home must be my home. You must be my *wife.*"

Unconsciously he assumed more the tone of command than of entreaty. He knew he should not be refused; he knew his offer would afford her what she needed—protection, a home, and affection.

Why did he put affection last? And was his happiness complete when he walked away the betrothed husband of Ruth Smith? What did his judgment say to it?

CHAPTER III.

ON THE WAY.

"You look quite fagged out, ma'am! Let me hold the child."

"No, no!" and she clasped the child tighter, and spoke hurriedly and excitedly. Then, as if recollecting herself, she added, in a quieter tone, "No, thank you; I am not tired," and she looked down at the little fair-haired creature nestling in her arms.

"That's curious!" said the man, as if speaking to himself.

He was a decent-looking working-man, who was taking a long journey in search of employment—not so long a journey, however, as his fellow-traveller. She had been in the carriage a couple of hours when he got in.

She was a small spare woman, poorly, nay, insufficiently, clothed; for, though it was autumn, the weather was stormy and winterly. Her black print gown and thin shawl did not keep out the cold, for now and then she shivered. But whatever her externals might be, there was something in her speech and manner that bespoke the lady.

The man was not far wrong when he called her "ma'am."

Though she would not allow it, she must have been very weary. It was getting late in the gloomy autumn afternoon, and she had taken her ticket at six that morning.

Her child was a little fragile creature, with a tiny white face, and a pair of wondering blue eyes. It was as lovely a child as could be, in spite of its delicate, almost puny, appearance. "A breath of wind might have blown it away," was a remark that had been more than once made of it.

The mother was a widow—you could see that, by the cap under the poor shabby bonnet—a widow, and this her only child, perhaps the one tie which bound her to life!

Where she was going to no one could find out. Many questions had been put to her in the course of the day, but had elicited nothing. A bundle and a small box were her only luggage. And onwards sped the whirling steam, from place to place, onward and onward. Yet the widow never moved. She was still on her way.

Once, when the train stopped, she said to the man who had spoken, "Is this East Bramley?"

"No, ma'am, not yet awhile. There's six more stations. I get out at the next."

She gave a little sigh of weariness. She was giving way, he thought. It went to his heart to see the pale face opposite, hour after hour.

"I wish I was going farther," said he, good-

naturally. "I could have been some help to you, maybe."

"I do not want help," replied she, quietly.

He did not say any more. Her distant manner repelled him, but his heart was touched all the same. He could not but see how she wrapped her shawl round her, in the vain attempt to keep out the cold. Her child was better and more suitably clad than she was. It had on a warm cloak, trimmed with fur, and warm mittens, and a comforter round its neck. At the first glance, you might have fancied it was the child of her mistress; but not at the second; the mother's love was apparent in every line of her face.

Six stations more, and the name was shouted up and down the platform—"East Bramley."

She got up at once. She was so stiff and benumbed that she could scarcely move. She handed out her bundle and the box; then she alighted with the child in her arms.

She stood a moment on the platform, looking up and down with a half-bewildered air. Then she spoke to a porter who was passing. "Can you tell me where a—a—gentleman of the name of Easton lives?"

"Easton? Do you mean him as had a lot of money left him some time back, and used to live at the old house by the mill?"

"Yes—yes."

Though her usual demeanour was so quiet and patient, she had every now and then a quick, impetuous way with her. She had it at this moment.

"He's one of our first men," continued the porter, carelessly, and reading the address on the box; "he lives at Bramley Hall."

A look of surprise, anxiety, and alarm were blended in the woman's face. It would have been difficult to say which was uppermost.

"Thank you," she replied, taking up her bundle. "Is there a lodging close by?"

"Close as can be. Just over the way. You go through that door."

"Are they expensive—the lodgings I mean?" asked she, timidly.

"No—oh no! I'll carry the box across. You see all this part of the town is new. That row of houses was not built two years ago. Mrs. Mason is the name. That's the card in the window."

"Thank you," she replied again.

He set down the box, and ran quickly away, for the bell had rung, and another train was approaching. He left the widow standing in the street.

She stood a moment looking about her with the same half-bewildered air. Then the wind rushed by her with such a nipping blast, that she was glad to knock hastily at the door.

The lodging she took consisted of a bedroom only, and she took it for one night.

"Shall you like tea or dinner, or what?" asked

the landlady, when the bargain was completed, and the stranger had taken possession.

"Nothing, thank you, except some milk and bread for the child."

"Poor little thing, how ill it looks," said the landlady, pityingly. She was herself the mother of seven.

"Ill! She is not ill," cried the widow, sharply; "she has never had a day's illness in her life."

"No offence—no offence!" said the landlady, quickly; and, with another glance at the child, "pray how old is she?"

"She will be two years old next month, bless her!" said the mother, fondly.

"Ah! you should see mine of that age. I've one that will be two in January. Such arms and legs she has! and such a colour! Why, she can run about anywhere; but then mine are all hearty children, thank Heaven for it!"

The widow did not speak, nor did she begin to undress the child till the other mother was gone. Then she took off the little hat, and showed the full beauty of the golden curls; and she unfastened the cloak, and took off the comforter.

What a fragile creature it was that lay on her lap! What tiny arms it had! how thin and wasted! Its little hands were like those of an infant. The look of delicacy in its mite of a face was almost unearthly.

She sat with it in her lap, looking at it as it lay still half asleep. It was a yearning, heart-broken look. You might have fancied she would have burst into a flood of tears; but she did not. Her tears never lay very near, and perhaps their source had been dried up.

"She has never been ill," repeated the widow to herself, holding an oft-recurring argument with her fears; "and I was a little puny child, and difficult to rear. Besides——"

A look of sharp distress came into her face. Surely she will weep; but she does not.

The child by this time was fully awake. It opened its large wondering eyes, and began to look round.

"Mamma."

"Yes, my darling—my sweet one—my treasure!" and she kissed it and pressed it nearer to her.

The wondering eyes—blue they were as heaven—took note of everything. Something seemed to be absent.

The child turned to her mother, and said, with a plaintive cry, "Papa—papa!"

Again the widow pressed the child to her heart.

"Ethel, papa is in heaven!" and she looked upwards—"in heaven, with God and the angels."

The child's eyes followed the direction of the mother's, and were raised upwards. The little face looked so pure, so frail, so ethereal, you might have fancied the spirit was about to wing its way upwards too.

The mother knew it might be so in her heart; she dare not gainsay the fact. Her child rarely laughed; it had a smile of almost angelic sweetness; it would sit quiet for hours; it was obedient and good and loving; for its age she thought it was a prodigy. It could understand all that was said to it; it lisped its little prayer morning and night, its small hands reverently put together; she almost dreaded to see it, it looked so unlike all that appertains to this grosser world; it was never fretful, and had never been absolutely ill. But the doctor had shaken his head, and said something about want of stamina; that the best of living was needed, and the best of care.

"She cannot rough it," the doctor said, "like other children. She is a hot-house plant by nature. If she has to rough it, she will die."

This speech had made the widow desperate. She could not screen her child. What shelter had she for herself?

But a step was on the stairs. She was of a reserved sensitive nature; she laid the child on the bed, and drew the coverlet over it; she could scarcely bear the woman of the house to see it; she did not want the little wasted arms and tiny hands to be

remarked upon. It was like touching a wound that festered.

But a struggle arose in her mind. She could not let the night slip by without doing her errand. The very purpose and gist of the journey lay in that errand. And she must leave the child in charge of a stranger.

The stranger was as kind as could be. When the child had eaten, and was laid to rest, she offered to sit by it.

"My little ones are in bed and asleep," said she, "and my husband is out. Go your ways, ma'am. I'll see to the bantling."

The mother had scarce tasted bit or sup. Her lips were too dry. She was too fevered with anxiety.

But she was obliged to go, there was no evading it. No possibility of lingering longer.

When she was gone, the landlady sat down by the bed. With a look of mingled curiosity and compassion, she raised the coverlet, and looked at the tiny arms and the small wasted body.

"Ah!" said she, laying it hastily down, as if ashamed of what she had done, "there is no doubt about it. The bantling will die!"

(To be continued.)

WORDS IN SEASON.

THE TRANSFIGURATION.—I.

BY THE REV. CANON BATEMAN, M.A., VICAR OF MARGATE.

WE are taught in Holy Scripture that "God and man is one Christ;" and never was the veil of the humanity so nearly dropped as on the Mount of Transfiguration, when for a little while the "earth was lightened with his glory."

The disciples were overpowered with the vision. It was with them, as with Abram when the word of the Lord came unto him in a vision, and a deep sleep fell upon him (Gen. xv. 12); as with Moses, when, hidden in a cleft of the rock, the glory of the Lord passed by (Exod. xxxiii. 22); as with Isaiah when he saw the Lord upon a throne, high and lifted up, and his train filled the temple, and one cried unto another and said, "Holy, holy, holy, is the Lord of hosts: the whole earth is full of his glory" (Isa. vi. 3); as with Daniel when he was left alone and saw the great vision, and there remained no strength in him, but he was in a deep sleep on his face, and his face towards the ground (Dan. x. 9)—so with Peter, James, and John, the three chosen disciples, on the Mount. They had seen the countenance of their Master change, and his raiment become "white and glistering;" they had heard Moses and Elias talk with him of "the decease which he should accomplish at Jerusalem;" they had felt that heavi-

ness and oppression of the senses which a vision so overpowering would necessarily produce; St. Peter had suggested the building of "three tabernacles," "not knowing what he said;" a cloud came overshadowing and chilling them all with fear; a voice was heard from the excellent glory saying, "This is my beloved son, in whom I am well pleased:" and then the vision passed away—Moses and Elias disappeared, and the disciples found themselves with "Jesus only."

Such is the general narrative of the Transfiguration, which will suggest several interesting topics.

I.—CHOSEN DISCIPLES.

Peter, James, and John were the three disciples chosen to be witnesses, not only of their Lord's highest exaltation, but of his deepest humiliation: they were called to be with him alike on Mount Tabor, and in the garden of Gethsemane. The Evangelists give no reason for this selection, and throw no light upon it. The "three" may be taken as the chosen representatives of Christianity in its earliest days, when to *believe*, to *love*, and to *suffer*, were its distinctive peculiarities. For this is that PETER on whose confession of faith, that Christ is "the Son of the living God," the Church

has ever rested; and this is that JOHN whose motto, even to extreme old age, was "Little children love one another;" and this is that JAMES who, when Herod the king stretched forth his hands to vex the Church, was "killed with the sword." Christianity needs to be represented by "these three," and without them it is little worth. Without faith, it has no rock; without love, it has no cohesion; without suffering, it has no reality. Read the sad doom, as recorded in the Epistle to the Hebrews, of those who "were once enlightened, and have tasted of the heavenly gift, and were made partakers of the Holy Ghost, and have tasted the good word of God, and the powers of the world to come;" the impossibility, "if they shall fall away, to renew them again unto repentance" (Heb. vi. 4). You behold here a fairly constructed building; plenty of light has been admitted; there is variety, if not abundance, in the larder; one heavenly Visitant seems to have turned aside, like a wayfaring man, to tarry for a night; there is a good look-out. Wherefore, then, does the building fall to pieces? Because there is nothing by which the whole is compacted together. Examine as narrowly as you may, you will see no signs of Peter, John, or James having ever been there; no signs of the "work of faith," or "labour of love," or "patience of hope," of which they stand as representatives. Without these, every Christian temple falls to pieces; and it is impossible to rebuild it. Whether our Lord by his choice would teach us this, we know not; but He "knoweth them that are his," and chosen disciples must have the necessary qualifications. They must be familiar with the heights and depths of Christianity. Theirs must be the faithful and fearless confession, the love above all things, and the willingness to suffer for his dear name's sake. Then are they fit companions for the Lord, whether he is transfigured on the mountain, or sheds as it were great drops of blood in the garden.

Chosen disciples need never fear. What is it that makes the soul sink when clouds are gathering, and prospects darkening, and families separating, and friends passing by on the other side? It is a sense of insecurity, a trembling, a heart-quake. There comes over us a feeling that we are not safe; that we have not obeyed the call of grace, not signed and sealed the covenant, not been made partakers of the Divine nature, not escaped "the corruption that is in the world through lust," not kept our garments "unspotted," not walked "as it becometh saints." The want of this conviction daunts the soul. If in the time when the power of choice was given us, when all things were quiet, when God "preserved us," and his "secret was upon our tabernacle;" when the heart was tender, and the habits could be pressed easily into the Divine mould, and thus formed into

the Divine image—if then we responded to God's call, and yielded to the influences of God's grace; if we went to Christ without the camp bearing his reproach; if we cast in our lot unreservedly with the people of God; if we were found "fellow-helpers to the truth," standard-bearers of the church, teachers of the young and ignorant, visitors of the "fatherless and widows in their affliction," communicants at the table, confessors of the Gospel—then no harm can happen to us. We are prepared for troublous times. To live is Christ, and to die is gain. We may go in and out like Ruth among the reapers; no one will touch us nothing will harm us, friends will be raised of the Lord, and sheaves will be dropped for us, beside us—all will be well. We are safe, for we are true penitents for sin, true believers in Christ, true followers of them who through faith and patience have inherited the promises. To us the word of promise appertains: "My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me; and I give unto them eternal life, and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand."

Let us see to it, then, that we are *chosen disciples*. Ah! that every reader of these words were but impressed with a sense of the supreme blessedness of reconciliation with God through Jesus Christ, and of having both the title and the meetness for the inheritance of the saints in light. May God inspire the prayer which shall ask for this preparedness alike for life and death, for things temporal and things eternal!

II.—MOUNTAIN PRAYERS.

Nothing is said about prayer in St. Matthew's account of the Transfiguration. We read only that, "After six days Jesus taketh Peter, James, and John his brother, and bringeth them up into an high mountain apart, and was transfigured before them." This shows the value of separate Gospels. What one omits, another supplies. Minute but interesting information is furnished. Questions suggested by one narrative, are answered in another. We might have supposed—and there would have been no harm in the supposition—that our Lord had taken the disciples to the mountain-top with a view to the Transfiguration only, and that his chief object was to confirm their faith by a manifestation of his glory; but this would seem to be a partial, if not an erroneous conclusion. St. Luke tells us that, "he took Peter, and James, and John, and went up into a mountain to pray." That was his object; but as he prayed (*ἐν τῷ προσεύχεσθαι*) the fashion of his countenance was altered." The transfiguration then came upon the prayer. The shining countenance and glistening garments were consequent on it; as in our own cases, we shall soon see, they often are.

But first, let us contemplate THE LORD in prayer. The bended knee in his case is a great mystery; but as an example, how far does it transcend all commands to pray! Who can restrain prayer when we see our Lord, himself an object of worship, worshipping; when so many nights are spent in, and mountains consecrated by, prayer?

What, then, is prayer? It is making known our requests to God, spreading our wants before him, acknowledging sinfulness, entreating forgiveness, imploring help, seeking counsel, telling sad tales of sorrow, recounting glad instances of deliverance. We have specimens of prayers like these from holy men of old—from Moses, from David, from Ezra, from Daniel—but these give no idea of what prayer must be, as uttered by the LORD OF ALL. What dropped from his lips during the still and solitary watches of the night? What aspirations rose to heaven from those mountain-tops? There must be something higher and holier in prayer itself than we have any conception of by our own experience, or from the records of earlier days! If we would learn what prayer really is, we must go to the upper chamber in Jerusalem, where Jesus is keeping the last passover with his disciples. He washes their feet, answers their inquiries, allays their apprehensions, speaks peace to their souls, promises the Comforter: and then bids them "Arise," and "go hence." They "rise," doubtless; but before they "go," there is the lingering, and grouping, and clinging, and more last words, so natural and touching when ties are stretching, and hearts are aching, and clouds are gathering—

"And days are dark, and friends are few."

The little company still stand grouped around their Lord in that upper chamber, and He, who "having loved his own, loved them unto the end," has still last words to speak—of a union amongst his followers close and mysterious, as between the vine and branches; of a life to be laid down for his friends; of love knitting hearts together; of a world hating and persecuting; of good cheer in the midst of tribulation.

Then prayer bursts forth; and if any one would know and feel what prayer really is, if he would know what really passed on bended knees and mountain-tops, let him, distrusting memory, and seeking a fresh impression on a prepared mind, turn to and read each word recorded in the seventeenth chapter of St. John, after the Lord had lifted up his eyes to heaven and appealed to the Divine fatherhood of God. . . .

That is prayer. That is what causes the face to shine, and the garments to become white as snow. In the case of our blessed Lord the change was real and visible; in our own cases it is figurative and spiritual, as may be easily explained in several cases, and in few words:—

1. Our souls are disquieted within us: we may be heavy with sorrow: the world may have cast out our names as evil: trouble may be hard at hand, whilst there is none to help: and we may be ready to cry out, "Lord, I am oppressed; undertake for me." For a time there is neither "voice nor motion, nor any that regardeth." The heavens are "like iron and brass." Our prayer seems to "return into our own bosom." But how, thus unanswered and unrelieved, can we face again the enemies that have prevailed before? How go up and down the world amidst the snares which have entangled our feet already? How with "ten thousand" meet him that cometh against us with "twenty thousand?" Again—and yet again, if needs be—the knee is bent, and the prayer poured out before God. The threefold retirement; the threefold prostration; the threefold repetition of the same words, as exhibited in the Garden of Gethsemane, are not unknown to the tried and tempted believer. And as at length there appeared an angel from heaven "strengthening Him," so now the Holy Spirit helps our infirmities, and there gradually comes over the mind a calmness, an acquiescence, a resignation, a freedom from all prepossessions, a submission unfeigned and unconditional, which displaces the complaints, the recriminations, the claims, the passionate appeals, the importunate requests which would take no denial, just before. The surface of the sea was agitated by fierce winds: there is now a great calm: the matter is left in God's hands, the care is cast upon him, the choice is laid aside, the decision is left. "Thou shalt answer for me, O Lord my God," we say: "Thou knowest best:" "Thy judgments are right:" "Not my will, but thine be done!"

What a transfiguration is here! How has the spirit of heaviness given place to the garments of salvation! How surely will the way be made plain, and the songs of deliverance be put into the mouth!

2. It is the same when we are vexed with "pining sickness," as Hezekiah was, or when we are constrained, with the sisters of Bethany, to say, "Lord, he whom thou lovest is sick:" or when, with Ezekiel, we hear the Divine decree, "Son of Man, behold I take away from thee the desire of thine eyes with a stroke." When from any of these causes, or others of a like kind, the voice of joy and gladness ceases, and the house is hushed in sadness, how wonderful is the transfiguration—how blessed to be able to draw near to the mercy seat, and to feel Nature, with its floods of tears, and clamorous complaints, and torrents of remonstrance, and self-upbraiding reminiscences of the past, and hopeless anticipations of the future, giving place to grace, with its recognition of God's hand, and silent acquiescence in his blessed will, and tracing



(Drawn by LOUISA TAYLOR.)

"Urging forward his ideal charger
With a lusty treble."—p. 12.

out of compensations, and following of the emancipated soul to glory and saying, "It is the Lord, let him do what seemeth him good." Is there not here also a species of transfiguration? Does not the countenance change? Do not the garments shine?

3. It is the same with the soul when turned from darkness unto light, and from the power of Satan unto God. Like the prodigal son, the man, perhaps, had been spending his substance in riotous living; or, like Gallio, he had cared for none of these things; or, like Saul, he had been exceedingly zealous of the traditions of his fathers; or, like the rich fool, he had been saying, "Soul, take thine ease, eat, drink, and be merry." But now the Holy Spirit has wrought in him conviction of sin; now the veil has fallen from his eyes; now he cries out, "What must I do to be saved?" Whilst he thus mourns and weeps and prays, there rises as it were before his eyes the vision of a bleeding cross, and from Him who hangs thereon, he hears the words, "Look unto me and be ye saved"—"As Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even

so is the Son of Man lifted up, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish but have everlasting life." He looks and lives. At this "glorious appearing" there comes into his mind a "blessed hope." The burden of sin falls off. His garments, whether woven with sin or self-righteousness, are cast away. He believes unto everlasting life. And, "being justified by faith, he has peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ." He receives the adoption of a son, and walks in newness of life. Men look upon him; and he is as it were transfigured before them. He was blind, now he sees. He was ignorant, now he is taught of God. He was in darkness, now he is in light. He was clad in "filthy rags," now he wears a spotless robe. He was a child of Satan, he is now a son of God.

Such are some of the results of mountain prayers. By Divine intercourse the soul is changed, afflictions are lightened, sorrows are assuaged, and all things are made to work together for good to them that love God and are the called according to his purpose.

A GRINDER'S STORY.

IN TWO PARTS.—BY GEORGE MANVILLE FENN.

PART I.

PLENTY of you know Sheffield by name; but I think those who know it by nature are few and far between. If you tried to give me your impressions of the place, you would most likely begin to talk of a black, smoky town, full of forges, factories, and furnaces, with steam-blasts hissing, and Nasmyth hammers thudding and thundering all day long. But there you would stop, although you were right as far as you went. Let me say a little more, speaking as one who knows the place, and tell you that it lies snugly embosomed in glorious hills, curving and sweeping between which are some of the loveliest vales in England. The town is in parts dingy enough, and there is more smoke than is pleasant; but don't imagine that all Sheffield's sons are toiling continually in a choking atmosphere. There is a class of men—a large class, and one that has of late attained to a not very enviable notoriety in Sheffield—I mean the grinders—whose task is performed under far different circumstances; and when I describe one wheel, I am only painting one of hundreds clustering round the busy town, ready to sharpen and polish the blades for which Sheffield has long been famed.

Through every vale there flows a stream, fed by lesser rivulets, making their way down little valleys rich in wood and dell. Wherever such a

streamlet runs trickling over the rocks, or bubbling amongst the stones, water rights have been established, hundreds of years old; busy hands have formed dams, and the pent-up water is used for turning some huge water-wheel, which in its turn sets in motion ten, twenty, or thirty stones in the long shed beside it, the whole being known in the district as "a wheel."

For years and years my way to work lay along by a tiny bubbling brook, overhung with trees, up past wheel after wheel, following the streamlet towards its head, higher up the gorge through which it ran—a vale where you might stand and fancy yourself miles from man and his busy doings, as you listened to the silvery tinkle of the water playing amidst the pebbles, the sweet twittering song of birds overhead, or the hum of bees busy amidst the catkins and the blossoms; watched the flashing of the bright water, as the sun glistened and darted amidst the leaves, till on the breeze would come the "plash, plash," of the water-wheel, and the faintly-heard harsh "chirr-r-r-r" of blade upon grindstone, when, recollecting that man was bound to earn his bread in the sweat of his brow, one would leave the beauties around, and hurry on to work.

But it was pleasant working where you had only to lift your eyes from the wet and whirling stone, and look out of the open shed window at the bright blue sky and sunshine. There was not much listening to the birds there, amidst the

hurrying din of the rushing stones, and the chafing of band, and shriek of steel blade being ground; but the toil seemed pleasanter there, with nothing but the waving trees to stay the light of God's sunshirts, and I used to feel free and happy, and able to drink in long draughts of bright, pure air, whenever I straightened myself from my task, and gathered strength for the next spell.

I could have been very happy there on that wheel, old and ramshackle place as it was, if people would only have let me. I was making pretty good wage, and putting by a little every week, for at that time it had come into my head that I should like to take to myself a wife. Now, I'd lived nine-and-twenty years without such a thing coming seriously to mind, but one Sunday, when having a stroll out on the Glossop Road with John Ross—a young fellow who worked along with me—we met some one with her mother and father; and from that afternoon I was a changed man.

I don't know anything about beauty, and features, and that sort of thing; but I know that Jenny Lee's face was the sweetest and brightest I ever saw; and for the rest of the time we were together I could do nothing but feast upon it with my eyes.

John Ross knew the old people; and when I came to reckon afterwards, I could see plainly enough why my companion had chosen the Glossop Road; for they asked us to walk with them as far as their cottage, which was nigh at hand; and we did, and stayed to tea; and then they walked part of the way back in the cool of the evening; while, when we parted, and John Ross began to chatter about them, it seemed as if a dark cloud was settling down over my life, and that all around was beginning to look black and dismal.

"You'll go with me again, Harry?" he said to me, as we parted. "I shan't wait till Sunday, but run over on Wednesday night."

"I don't know; I'll see," I said; and then we parted.

I went out that afternoon happy and light-hearted, I came back mad and angry. "He wants me to go with him to talk to the old people, while he can chatter and say empty nothings to that girl, who is as much too good for him as she is for—"

"Me!" I said, after a pause, for I seemed to grow sensible all at once, and to see that I was making myself what I called rather stupid. Then I began to take myself to task, and to consider about the state of affairs, seeing how that John Ross's visits were evidently favoured by the old people, perhaps by their daughter, and therefore why was I to thrust myself in the way, and,

besides being miserable myself, make two or three others the same?

"I'll go to bed and have a good night's rest," I said, "and so forget all about it."

How easy it is to make one's arrangements, but how hard sometimes to follow them out! I had no sleep at all that night; and so far from getting up and going to begin the fresh week's work light-hearted and happy, and determined not to pay any more visits along with John Ross, I was dull, disheartened, and worrying myself as to whether Jenny Lee cared anything for my companion.

"If she does," I said to myself, "I'll keep away; but if she does not, why may she not be brought to think about me?"

Somehow or another, John Ross had always made a companion of me, in spite of our having very different opinions upon certain subjects. He was for, and I was strongly against trades unions. He always used to tell me that he should convert me in time; but although we had been intimate for three years, that time had not come yet. On the contrary, certain outrages that had disgusted the working men, had embittered me against the unions. However, we kept friends; and it was not upon that question that he became my most bitter enemy.

After many a long consultation with myself, I had determined to go with Ross to the Lees only once more, and had gone; but somehow that "only once more" grew into another and another visit; till from going with John Ross alone, I got into the habit of calling without him, and was always well received. Jenny was pleasant, and merry, and chatty, and the old folks sociable; and the pleasure derived from these visits smothered the remorse I might otherwise have felt, for I could plainly see, from John Ross's manner, how jealous and annoyed he was. And yet his visits always seemed welcome. There was the same cheery greeting from the old folks, the same ready hand-shake from Jenny; but matters went on until, from being friends, John Ross and I furiously hated one another, even to complete avoidance; while, from the honest, matured thoughts of later years, I can feel now that it was without cause, Jenny's feelings towards us being as innocent and friendly as ever emanated from the breast of a true-hearted English girl.

But we could not see that, and in turn accused her of lightness and coquetry, of playing off one against the other, and thought bitterly of much that was kindly, true, and well meant.

As may be supposed, such feelings bore bitter fruit. John Ross accused me of treachery and sowing dissension, ending by desiring, with threats, that I should go to the Lees no more; while I, just as angry, declared that unless forbidden by Jenny, I should go there as frequently as I desired.

What followed may easily be imagined. We came to blows. It was during dinner-hour, and the wheel was stopped; we had been talking by the dam-side, and at last, when in his anger, he had struck me, I had furiously returned the blow; then more passed, and after a sharp struggle, I shook myself free, when, unable to save himself, John Ross fell heavily into the deep water, and plunged out of sight for a few moments. But there was no danger, for as he came up he was within reach, and stretching out my hand, he

seized it, and I helped him out, my anger gone, and ready to laugh at him, as he stood there pale and dripping.

"I shan't forget this," he said, shaking his fist in my face.

"Pooh! nonsense, man!" I exclaimed, catching the threatening hand in both mine. "Let bygones be bygones, and make friends." But, snatching his hand away, he dashed in amongst the trees, and in a few moments was out of sight.

(To be concluded in our next.)

YEARS AFTER.



D is great: not as I would have made him,
While my world was yet a green field land;
When from my own fancy I portrayed him
(As he toyed before me, switch in hand,

Urging forward his ideal charger
With a lusty treble; and I said,
"Is not this a shadowing of the larger
Work that waits him in the fields of red?")

When I took my idle brush and limned him
As in after years his form should be
In the fight, a glorious murk half dimmed him—
For a time-drawn face who'd care to see?

But his bearing spake the lord commander,
And the fiercest of the fight was where
He, the future age's Alexander,
Flashed his bright steel sabre in the air.

Ah! I blundered. Was I not a father?
For myself a seeker after fame?
Therefore for his sake would I not rather
Leave to him the more enduring name?

But my hope had different fruition:
In the grander wars of God he fights,
Bearing in his breast the true commission—
Joy to man, and unto God His rights.

His then was the right, as mine the wrong, quest;
He seeks men to fill his Fatherland,
So God gives to him a sweeter conquest,
And a place more close to His right hand. B.

A WORD UPON ENVY.

BY THE REV. W. M. STATHAM.



ENVY is one of the most despicable of passions. There is scarcely a crime to which it will not lead its victims! It was envy that robbed the poor Naboth of his vineyard, and added murder to the theft. It was envy that led the guilty Absalom to desire the throne of his father David. It destroys all that is best and noblest in character. So subtle is it in its workings, that we learn on the highest testimony that, "Envy is rottenness of the bones:" it eats out all honour and manliness; it gives sleepless nights and restless days. Moreover, envy is utterly useless; it helps nobody, it effects no alteration, it wins no goal. As we read in Job, "it slayeth the silly one;" and all sensible people must feel that there is marvellous silliness in envy.

But if the indulgence of envy does us no good, it is calculated to do other people much harm.

Every passion tends to incarnation in some way. Evil emotion turns to action, and becomes embodied in ignoble deeds! So deceitful is envy in its operation, and so successful in its harm, that the question is asked in Scripture, "Who can stand before envy?" It undermines the very ground you are standing upon; it breathes inuendoes against your character and reputation, which, light as air to utter, are strong as iron and sharp as steel, to do you damage. Yes; envy will depreciate the character it cannot publicly defame; it will explain virtues to be vices in disguise; it will sneer with the lip and stab with the suggestion of an evil hint in your absence, whilst in your presence it will admire and applaud.

That the envious pay the penalty in their own misery, does not mitigate the wrong they do to others. It does help, indeed, to vindicate the ways of God to men, as it shows us the Divine

hand dispensing, even in this world, to each man according to his sin! But the misery they feel does not atone for the misery they inflict. Envy is one of the basest of passions: it is the essence of devilism. By it Satan lost his seat in heaven; and by it men and women have, through the long centuries, sinned and suffered in endless ways.

Now, the Bible speaks of the envy of *sinners* as one of the sorriest envies of all, and says, "Let not thine heart envy sinners." Yet, what multitudes do! There is something so fascinating about the exterior of gaiety and vice, that the treacherous heart turns with a smile to the fair face of a fallen world. The temptation to envy certainly exists! Who shall say he never heard sin's seductive whisper with a longing heart? Sin seems to pay well: its returns are *quick* and, to a certain extent, *sure*. When you disregard conscience, Christ, religion, virtue, purity, nobleness, honour, heaven, you seem to get rid of a whole cohort of restraining powers—to be able to sin, and enjoy it—every hedge is broken down, and thought may run riot in the fields of imagination, and conduct follow unbridled in the way. Take the position of the Christian. He, too, could sin and enjoy it, if it were not for his conscience, his vows, his love and devotion to Christ. Let it not be supposed that the Egypt he has once left never attracts him again. The writer of a recent book shows how the old scenes would often live again in the memory of the Corinthian convert—how imagination would paint the old heathen pageantry once more—how the undulatory limbs of the graceful dancers in the pagan festivals, with multiform aspects of the heathendom he had left, would fill his vision again—and in weak moments he would be very temptable. And how true it is now to us all that this world, on its sinful side, is not void of attractiveness. Only the hypocrite passes on as if it were nought to him: the Christian man says, "If I am to stand here at all, to live at all, I must watch and pray, lest I enter into temptation." And the wise man, when he feels envy rising in his heart, does not say, "Oh! this is only a little thought; I must wait till it germinates before I uproot it!" No; he goes at once to his Redeemer—to his cross—to die with Jesus there—that he may be crucified to the world—that he may no more envy sin, when he sees how it betrayed and crucified his Lord.

But the secret sphere of envy is to be seen. Let not thine heart envy sinners. There are none of us upon whom temptations fall like forks of flame on fields of ice. None of us can say, "The prince of this world cometh and hath nothing in me." It is because there is *something* in us that the temptation becomes a power. Let us re-

member that temptation is always a relative term. Temptation is not the same to two persons, any more than disease is; one may be receptive of it through a bad state of the system, the other may not. So is it with temptation. Where there is much envy there is little new life. The new life of a Christian is his greatest safeguard. So long as he only fears sin his safety is small; when he hates it then is he secure. We have no moral police with us in the walks of life to restrain us and control us. We are made children and then we are safe. The new life is in the measure of its degree the measure of our safety. Many things would be no temptation to you now, which, if you look back, would have been so once. As a child you were tempted to idleness, and punished with a lesson; now, your best holiday is a book. Your tastes have changed. Thus it is with a true Christian. If he is ever hanging about the outskirts of forbidden pleasure grounds, and keeping a longing eye on forbidden fruit, he is a very Lilliputian Christian indeed, and his fall is not very far off; but if he finds the new life growing in him, all is well. This sphere of envy, however, we none of us can see. The sinner's inner self we cannot see, or we should not be tempted to envy him at all. Envy would die like a noxious flower in the east wind, if we could see the experiences of others. Many might have been found to envy Solomon his power to satisfy desire in every sphere of pleasure. I dare say many around him did envy him. I think it is probable the Queen of Sheba did; possibly even the prime minister of the neighbouring Egypt did. But God has inspired Solomon to write us his inner history, and a sadder heart never lived. Envy not sinners, is the testimony of Solomon. The couch on which they repose has no rest to correspond to it in the heart. The brightness of the eye has no co-existence of gladness in the spirit. Envy not! You remember who made that nature of man's, now fallen so low. It was made by God, and nothing but God can satisfy it. That broken arch of the inner temple reverberates no music now—there are hollow echoes in it, that is all. Envy not! Enter within, and over every Christless heart—the rich, the proud, the fawned on, the gay—there is written, "ALL is vanity and vexation of spirit." Envy not the oppressor, and choose none of his ways. His hands may be full of gains, but not so full as his heart is of pains, or shall we not rather say of latent powers and possibilities of pain. Envy not the merry shout of the wicked; even in laughter the heart is sorrowful, and the end of that mirth is heaviness.

One certain specific as a cure for envy ought certainly to be found in the consideration of the true and real pleasures within the reach of us all.

Joy is not far from the heart of every man—I mean, such joy as the *conditions* of his present life render possible. We cannot ignore facts. Here are sin, suffering, sorrow, shame, wrong, cruelty, treachery, death. We cannot shut these out! We cannot keep an angel, with flaming sword, about any Eden of our own habitation, and say, “Enter ye not!” We might, indeed, manage for a season to forget these things: but to forget them, is not for them to forget us. There are (and must be) days of darkness for all. But there is possible to us a joy amid all conditions, and this is Christian joy. We have seen the picture of a Blindfold Justice; I wonder that there never has been one painted of a Blindfold Joy—a worldly man seeking for gladness away from God. Christian joy is open-visaged; sees all life’s conditions, and meets them with a smile: catches the inspiration of the voice which says, “In the world ye shall have tribulation: but be of good cheer; I have overcome the world. Envy the wicked?—No! When I can look into the Bible and see my Father’s face; go into the world and hear my Father’s voice; enter within the secret chamber of my own heart, and find there the pavilion of a reconciled God and Father, I need envy none. The Saviour has not disappointed his disciples, or falsified his promise, “that ye might have my joy fulfilled in yourselves.” Yes, and thus it is; the experience of a thousand generations of saints has attested it. “Wisdom’s ways are ways of pleasantness, and all her paths are peace.” Where humility and the fear of the Lord are, there is happiness indeed. We may mourn over the fact that so few Christians attain the high ideal of Christian joy; but what would that religion avail us, which had not its ideal ever beyond us? Think how kind God is, thus to bring real joy within the reach of all! If happiness depended on estate, how poor the great world of hearts must ever be! But the priceless blessings of peace and joy in the Holy Ghost are

within the reach of all who seek them in a spirit of sincere faith.

There are wealthy men whose carriages dash by us and whose broad acres spread before us, who have all the cares and none of the comforts of the humblest; and there are proud damsels in the world of fashion who sweep by with dainty tread and costly apparel, whose lot no peasant’s barefoot daughter in the Highlands need envy as she goes across the bonny heather. I scarcely ever knew a devout Christian man, however poor, who did not feel that the pearl of price in his heart outweighed all other treasures. Let not thine heart envy sinners. But if envy be legitimate at all in the sphere of human life, envy rather the restful peace, the cheerful hope, and the consecrated life of a Christian man. The heart, as we have seen, is the seat and centre of the danger. Long before the steps go astray the heart goes wrong. In cases of moral defection men’s thoughts antedate their fall. Our Lord says, “Out of the heart proceed evil thoughts, murders, adulteries.” Let us remember how often the heart is deceived through the eye. We only look on the surface life; then we taste. So we find our mistake too late. Sin will not bear to be tried. There is no serpent in this world’s garden that will bear a moment’s dallying with. Coiled up at the bottom of the fabled wine-cup, it soon darts up to strike and sting. What words of warning the inspired Book contains concerning deceitful things; and amongst deceitful things the heart is the “most deceitful of all.”

How pleasant it is to turn in closing to the prospects which we need never envy, for the simple reason that we may possess them ourselves at once. Wisdom’s ways may be ours. “Length of days and long life and peace shall they add to thee.” “Happy is the man that findeth wisdom, and the man that getteth understanding. She is a tree of life to them that lay hold upon her: and happy is every one that retaineth her.”

LILLIE’S KITTEN.

BY EDITH WALFORD.



H, mamma, mamma,” said Lillie Marston, as she burst unceremoniously into the room where Mrs. Marston was sitting. “Elsie Mannering has two beautiful little kittens, all white, with black stripes down their backs, and she says they will have bushy tails, and she says I may have one of them! Oh, mamma! I may, mayn’t I? They are such dears!” And the little girl clasped her hands in an ecstasy, and looked anxiously towards her mother for an answer.

The room in which Mrs. Marston was sitting was a pretty room in the rectory of her son, the Reverend Alexander Marston; the ceiling was lofty, the walls were painted a cool green, and two French windows opened on to a charming little lawn. Before another large window stood a cage which completely filled it, and reached nearly to the ceiling, and in it were canaries and bullfinches, pets of her son’s. In fact, Mrs. Marston was, at the very moment of Lillie’s entrance, chopping hard-boiled eggs for some of those very birds. So, without

hesitating a moment, when the child made her request, she looked up and said, "Lillie, do you love your brother?"

"Yes, mamma," said Lillie, but she gave a very uneasy glance at the birds.

"And are you grateful to him for his kindness to both of us?"

"Of course, mamma," returned Lillie.

"And don't you know, my dear, that he has a perfect dread of cats, on account of his birds?"

"Well, mamma," replied Lillie, who by this time was quite certain of the coming verdict, "I don't see why Alec should have so many pets, and I not one. It's a great shame, and I don't want Alec to keep me, or send me to school, or anything, if he doesn't like. I never asked him to. Mayn't I have the kitten?"

"No, my dear," replied Mrs. Marston, in a tone that showed how shocked she was at Lillie's ungrateful speech—"certainly not."

Lillie bounded out of the French window, found a convenient spot for a seat, threw herself on the ground, buried her head in her holland apron, and began sobbing convulsively.

"What a shame!" she exclaimed, when she could get breath enough. "Such a beautiful kitty! such a rare thing, too, with a bushy tail and all! I hate canaries, I do!" she continued, passionately clutching whole handfuls of grass and scattering them to the wind.

When her passion had cooled a little, she began to think, not repentantly, but rebelliously. These thoughts soon broke out into angry words. "I will have the kitten," she kept repeating—"I will have the kitten. I'll keep it in the loft, and I'll go and see it and feed it every day."

Elsie Mannering lived only a very little way from Lillie Marston's; and in ten minutes more Lillie had bathed her eyes, smoothed her hair, put on her garden-hat, and walked off to Elsie.

Oh, Elsie," she cried out, as soon as she caught sight of her, "which kitten am I to have?"

"Will your mamma really let you have it? Oh, how nice!" said Elsie.

"Come here," said Lillie, "and sit on this seat."

The two friends sat down, and in a very low voice whispered together. You may guess what they said, for Elsie's first loud remark was—"How nasty and disagreeable! I would, if I were you."

"You fetch me the kitten out here, and I will take it home in my apron; and if mamma sees me and calls me, I shall run away."

The kitten was brought, and after bestowing a good deal of admiration upon it, Lillie wrapped it securely in the skirt of her apron, and went home. Mrs. Marston did not see her, and she carried her prize in triumph to the loft. It was a very small place indeed, but it had a little window in it, and was quite a palace for a kitten. It was on the left-

hand side of a small flight of narrow stairs that led to the roof, where Lillie's brother had a kind of conservatory built. Lillie knew that Alec never so much as opened the door of the loft when he passed it; and no one else went there, the stairs were so steep and awkward.

To this loft, then, the kitten was taken, and in a very short time provided with a saucer of milk, which Lillie had begged for herself. Then the loft-window was shut, the door was shut and locked, and the kitten was a prisoner.

At luncheon Lillie was so calm and apparently humble, that Mrs. Marston congratulated herself upon her little daughter's power to overcome disappointment. At dinner she was somewhat astonished at the rapidity with which her plate was cleared. The fact was, Miss Lillie wrapped up several choice bits in her clean handkerchief for "Beauty," as she determined to call the cat.

Very nearly all day "Beauty" was allowed to roam about the roof, for there were no houses near for her to jump on to, and, therefore, no fear of losing her; and the servants never thought of going up there. So things went on for nearly a week, when one morning at breakfast Mrs. Marston said, "Lillie, I think I have something pleasant to tell you; I hope it will make up for your disappointment about the kitten."

Lillie's face grew scarlet, but Mrs. Marston continued—"You are to go and spend two days with Georgie and Laura at 'The Firs.'"

At any other time Lillie would have jumped for joy at such a proposition, but now the coveted kitten was, she thought, a dreadful bar to her happiness. So, much to the astonishment of Mrs. Marston and Alec, she faltered out, with the tears on her eyelashes just ready to drop—

"I would rather stay at home, mamma; I don't want to go."

"What in the name of wonder for?" asked Alec, with a mouthful of pie on its way to his lips. This was quite a strong expression for him to use; but if you had known Lillie's usual behaviour when a treat was proposed as well as he did, you would have been as much astonished.

Mrs. Marston opened her eyes, and she then said quietly, "The poor child can't be well. A change will do her good."

Lillie passionately protested that she did not wish to go; but every time she said so only increased her mamma's determination that she should.

What should she do with Beauty? Decisive measures must be taken, for in a few hours she would be off to "The Firs."

You have seen how hasty Lillie was, and you may depend she was not long in deciding upon what to do. She went into the pantry, and stole (yes, I repeat it—stole) a raw mutton chop, several slices of ham that had been left from breakfast, and a large

piece of cheese. All these she cut into small pieces, and conveyed to the loft, as well as a jug of milk and a large piece of bread. The milk she poured into a very rusty tin pan, and the other articles she distributed about the floor. She gave a parting pat to Beauty, and a kiss to her pretty head, and then she stepped outside, locked the door, and put the key in the bosom of her frock.

"Only two days," she kept repeating to herself—"only two days. Surely that will last till I come back. And then she went to "The Firs."

Two days passed, and Georgie and Laura must have Lillie to stay longer. She said she couldn't; and when they pressed her very hard, she said she *wouldn't*. But Georgie and Laura's mamma said she was to stay, so she did; and very miserable she was, at times, I assure you. Once or twice she had nearly made up her mind to write a little letter to her mamma, and confess all about it. Then she thought, "Why, how silly! If Beauty's all right when I get home, who need know?"

What a naughty girl!

The two days reached to ten, and at last Lillie came home. She had scarcely taken her hat and jacket off, when she rushed to the loft; and there what a woful sight presented itself! The poor kitten lay just inside the door, stiff and dead—as dead as dead could be—its pretty blue eyes were as dull as dull, and its beautiful white fur was ragged and dirty. It had been—*starved to death*! No trace of food was in the loft; the kitten had eaten it all in four days at the most, and the other six it had gradually starved to death. Lillie knelt down and felt it. It was scarcely cold, but it was quite, quite dead. Down-stairs ran Lillie, sobbing as if her heart would break. She rushed to her mamma, and sobbed out—"Oh, mamma! can you ever trust me again?—will you ever forgive me? I brought home that kitten you said I musn't have, and I kept it in the loft, and—and it is *starved to death*!"

Lillie was evidently so sensible of her naughtiness, and in such grief, that her mamma left her to herself then; but afterwards she had a long talk with her, and told her that for a long time she must not expect to be trusted, and must be watched, for fear another temptation should lead her so far astray. Her brother, too, was highly displeased, and expressed his unmitigated disappointment in Lillie's character, which was very hard to bear. All this severe discipline, however, had the right effect; and Lillie was quite sufficiently punished before the happy day when her mother told her that she had perfect confidence in her.

And now, dear little readers, if you are ever so much inclined to be as disobedient to your parents as the little girl in my story, try and not give way, and remember "Lillie's Kitten."

"THE QUIVER" BIBLE CLASS.

[Under this head we propose to provide our younger readers each week with a suitable employment for their leisure on the Sunday. It will be our endeavour to give such questions as shall stimulate them to a further study of the subjects touched upon; and we hope parents will assist us in that endeavour, by encouraging their children to make a regular practice of so important and beneficial an exercise. The method we would recommend is, that the children should write down their answers to each set of questions, and keep them until they are able to compare them with our own solutions, which will appear in a subsequent number to that in which their respective questions are given. By this means will be established, we presume, the largest Bible Class ever known, for its members will number very many thousands, in almost every part of the world. Some of our Bible Class will be in Canada, some in the United States, some in Australia and New Zealand, and others in more or less remote places; and it is pleasant indeed to us to think that by this simple plan all these shall be bound together in one sweet fellowship every Lord's Day, studying the same Scripture, thinking the same thoughts, and, above all, uniting in our earnest prayer that every member of "THE QUIVER" BIBLE CLASS may become one of that holier and larger Brotherhood of Him who says: "Except ye be converted, and become as little children, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven."—THE EDITOR.

1. Which was the learned tribe in Israel?
2. An Ethiopian who trusted in the Lord, and his life was given him for a prey?
3. Upon what did the manna fall?
4. And what did this signify?
5. A man who was hypocrite enough to weep with some mourning worshippers, thus deceiving them into the city, and there slew them?
6. What two prophecies refer to the taking of Jerusalem by the Romans?
7. Who predicted that an invading king should pitch his tent over a spot he indicated?
8. What other nation besides Israel is to be scattered to every people?
9. In Ezek. xii. 13 it is said of Zedekiah, "I will bring him to Babylon . . . yet he shall not see it." How could this be?

FREEDOM.

A SONNET.

FREEDOM as God moves forward through the earth
The people cry for freedom round his feet;
And God hears always, for in Him no dearth
Of love can be for aspirations meet,
And liberty He grants when men entreat.
Firm paced, the conquering army of the Lord—
Law, Order, Toleration, Worship Free—
Moves to the great fulfilment of His word
That all the kingdoms of the earth shall be
Full of His knowledge, boundless as the sea.
Think ye He hears not?—that He long delays,
Though daily have His people not been dumb,
Wrestling in spirit? though the Church still prays
(A Christ-taught supplicant) Thy kingdom come?